

282, the Iran Sanctions Act, a bill that I co-sponsored. I based my vote on the significant changes the International Relations Committee made to the underlying bill, many of which I believe are counter-productive to the U.S. efforts to deter Iran from its nuclear ambitions. It is also a reflection of my strong concerns, based on numerous recent and credible reports, that the Administration is actively exploring and studying a number of military options against Iran. The significant alterations made to H.R. 282 in Committee and the changing political circumstances informed my decision to vote against this legislation.

I want to outline several changes made to H.R. 282 that I oppose. Specifically, H.R. 282 was amended to include a brand new section requiring the president to impose sanctions under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 against any "agency or instrumentality" of a foreign government investing \$20 million or more in the development of Iran's oil or gas industry. The president is also required to publish in the Federal Register a list of all U.S. and foreign entities that have invested more than \$20 million in Iran's energy sector retroactive to August 5, 1996. I believe such a heavy-handed approach targeting foreign investment in the oil or gas industry is misguided. The Department of State, in a letter to the House International Relations Committee, has stated that H.R. 282 impairs our government's ability to work with our allies in pursuit of a diplomatic solution in dealing with Iran's nuclear ambitions. Rather than encouraging a collaborative process with our colleagues at the U.N. Security Council, this bill penalizes them. I believe this new prohibition, which was not part of H.R. 282 at the time I co-sponsored it, hinders our ability to proactively work with our partners in responding to the challenges imposed by Iran.

In addition, I am very troubled by a new provision of the bill, incorporated by the International Relations Committee, which purports to strengthen the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. It contains the following "finding" of Congress: "Iran has manipulated Article IV of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty to acquire technologies needed to *manufacture nuclear weapons* under the guise of developing peaceful nuclear technology." [Emphasis added.] I find this language troubling. The finding states a conclusion that Iran is seeking to manufacture nuclear weapons as it pursues the development of nuclear power generation. I fear that this or a subsequent Administration could use such finding to justify an invasion or other military action against Iran, under its doctrine of preemption. Prior to its 2003 invasion of Iraq, the Administration cited the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998 as one of its bases for taking this country into war. A Congressional finding that Iran is seeking to manufacture nuclear weapons could provide a basis for the Administration to conduct preemptive strikes or declare war against Iran. I believe Congress should not, once again, provide cover to this Administration, which has shown ample evidence of incompetence in the collection of intelligence on the development of weapons of mass destruction by foreign nations. A Congressional "finding" is no substitute for reliable

intelligence on the status of Iran's nuclear program. Mr. Speaker, much has changed in the months between the introduction of H.R. 282 and our floor debate last week. Iran abandoned its voluntary suspension of enrichment-related activities at the beginning of this year. Subsequently the U.N. Security Council called for Iran's compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. The International Atomic Energy Agency reported just last week that Tehran's work on enriching uranium was accelerating even as it continued to block inspectors' attempts to learn more about the troubling parts of the program. The United States is now engaged in the difficult task of persuading the U.N. Security Council to order an end to Iran's nuclear program. Aggressive diplomatic efforts with our allies are now more critical than ever. Yet, recent reports, including a detailed article by Seymour Hersh published in the New Yorker, suggest that the Administration is planning to pursue military options, including the use of nuclear weapons, against Iran to prevent its acquisition and development of atomic warheads. News articles have also disclosed that senior Pentagon strategists are updating plans to strike Iran's nuclear sites. The Administration's apparent pursuit of a nuclear option before diplomatic efforts have run their course is not only irresponsible, it is simply wrong. Passing H.R. 282, as amended in Committee, at this critical juncture not only appears to represent Congress' acquiescence in this Administration's foolhardy tendency to plan for war without diplomacy, it risks validating the Administration's go-it-alone approach in chasing a military solution to Iran's nuclear ambition.

Make no mistake; I believe the threat imposed by Iran must be addressed swiftly and skillfully, but through diplomatic means. I supported the underlying goals of the Iran-Libya sanctions Act enacted in 1996 that sought to deter private foreign investment in Iran's energy sector. But much has changed between the time when I signed on as a cosponsor of H.R. 282 and the time I was asked to vote on it, both with regard to the substance of the bill and the political climate surrounding the issue. At a time when the House of Representatives should be putting our full support behind multilateral diplomacy and efforts to persuade the U.N. Security Council to act decisively, we passed a bill that would further alienate our allies and give cover for a military attack by this Administration. For these reasons, I could not, in good conscience, vote for this bill that I once supported. It is my sincere hope that the Senate will take a much more balanced approach that would truly strengthen, not hinder, the interests of our diplomatic efforts in addressing Iran's nuclear threat.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO CENTAURI HIGH SCHOOL

**HON. JOHN T. SALAZAR**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 8, 2006*

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and applaud the Centauri High

School Falcons Girls Basketball team for their thrilling victory over the Denver Christian High Crusaders in the Colorado State Championship this past March. This riveting victory marks Centauri High School's second girls state championship, one undoubtedly deserved by this group of hard-working and devoted players.

Displaying their tenacious defense, the Falcons forced 31 turnovers against the Crusaders. Even though they were down by 8 points at the end of the first half, Centauri High proved its maturity and experience, regrouping and coming back in the second half to win the game 62 to 57.

The Falcons are soaring high today not only because they are great individuals, but because they are great athletes who work together. Led by coach Dave Forster, teammates Janette McCarroll, Amanda Gylling, Marcie Cooley, Wynona Miller, and Lucia Muniz all displayed the determination, focus, and teamwork needed to defeat their challenging opponent. The Falcons' victory was based on a combination of accurate shooting, powerful defense, and masterful passing. Throughout the intense second half, the team never lost its focus or concentration, sinking pivotal free throws and continually executing plays with perfection.

The Falcons' ability to work together is a true inspiration to any person who has ever been on a team or worked with others. Once again, congratulations to these amazing student athletes and all of Centauri High School on their great victory!

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#### TRIBUTE TO PASTOR THOMAS J. BOYD OF SALEM BAPTIST CHURCH ON HIS RETIREMENT

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**HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, May 8, 2006*

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to give tribute to the Reverend Thomas J. Boyd, retiring pastor of Salem Baptist Church in Brooklyn, New York. A Native Brooklynite born eighty-nine years ago in Bedford Stuyvesant, Reverend Boyd has for forty years led his flock through the true spirit of the Creator. His vision and hard work have resulted in more than half a million dollars in scholarship funds distributed to deserving young people and through his leadership, Salem Baptist Church has grown dramatically in size and membership.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that this tribute to the Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Boyd be entered into the RECORD so that we can remember his good works and a lifetime of achievement.